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**GUIDE TO THE LITERATURE OF CITIES: Abstracts And Bibliography**  
**Part 11: Urban Land Use**

Morris Zeitlin

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## GUIDE TO THE LITERATURE OF CITIES:

## ABSTRACTS AND BIBLIOGRAPHY

## PART II: URBAN LAND USE

by

Morris Zeitlin

## INTRODUCTION

How their land is owned and used is basic to the welfare of cities. The private ownership, use, and misuse of urban land is at the root of urban problems. The study of land use has therefore received much scholarly attention -- within the limitations of social science, of course. Much of its literature strives to inform land and real-estate owners on how to exploit land, as a commodity and rent-bearing enterprise, most rationally and profitably. But some of it tries to evaluate land use from a social, or "public interest", point of view.

Misuse of urban land has been a major cause of the overwhelming urban traffic problems. Accordingly, the literature on cities takes pains to reveal the relation between land use and traffic generation.

The contradiction between the private ownership of land and the social nature of its use has so impaired urban life and function that even the most conservative governments and municipal administrations have been forced to control the use of privately owned land and have tried to modify its forms of tenure. In some, the realization has grown that urban problems cannot be solved as long as a multitude of land use decisions are freely made by as many land owners in pursuit of private and in disregard of

public interests. This realization gave rise to advocacy of public urban land ownership and, in some cases, adoption of various urban land reforms.

## URBAN LAND USE

## ABSTRACTS OF SELECTED WORKS

Abrams, Charles. "The Uses of Land in Cities." Scientific American, Vol. 213, No. 3, September 1965, pp. 151-160. Photos. Charts.

The shift from rural to urban settlement reduces occupied land. The urban and suburban population of the United States, seventy percent of its total, occupies only about one percent of its area. Urbanizing nations face no land shortage problems, only problems of wasteful use of land. In developing countries, the chief urban land problems are the enormous crowding by squatter shacks and unchecked land speculation.

To improve the function of cities, all city governments must control the use of privately-owned land through regulation, taxation, or public acquisition. Regulation by zoning, used mainly to exclude the poor from choice living areas, has failed to improve the urban environment. Taxation, used cruelly, often retarded rather than advanced the welfare of cities. Regulation and taxation having failed, city governments, in most countries, have turned toward public acquisition of land.

Urbanization is altering established attitudes toward land ownership. In the United States private land rights remain strong, but large enterprises prefer to lease rather than own land, and land-taking for public use has steadily increased. In Britain, reconstruction needs, urban congestion, and concern over land preservation widened support for public ownership and national control of urban land. In the U.S.S.R., all land is public property, but individuals may own private cottages or co-operative apartments. In the foreseeable future, land policies of nations will continue to differ from private to public ownership and various mixtures of the two. The world's cities -- their forms, populations, land uses and governments -- continue to change.

Bartholomew, Harlan. Land Uses in American Cities. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1955. 196pp. Illustrated. Photos. Tables. Charts. Maps.

To get "some idea of the trends in (urban) land utilization," Bartholomew studied and compiled statistical information for 53 central cities, 33 satellite communities, and 11 complete urban areas representing "a wide cross section of American cities -- diverse in size, character, and location." For each of the study's land use classifications (single-family dwellings, two-family dwellings, multifamily dwellings, commercial, light industry, heavy industry, railroads, streets, parks, public property) the author derived an absolute acreage, a percentage of the total developed area, and a ratio of the area to population.

Among the study's findings and conclusions:

1. Despite their variety in size, social organization, economic activities, and number and type of institutions, cities are similar in many ways. Each is a specialized part of the nation's social and economic system, a center of production and consumption in which trade and activities tend to form similar groups, and each contains similar dwellings, institutions and amenities for urban living. Therefore, "the majority of conclusions valid for a diverse group of cities will apply, in appropriately modified form, to any city of approximately the same size."
2. The developed area of a city per 100 persons varies with the size of its population. The smaller the city the larger this ratio; conversely, the larger the city the smaller this ratio, "until with the larger cities something of an equilibrium is reached." On an average, central cities use 6.89 acres, and satellite cities 8.69 acres, per 100 persons. But metropolitan areas develop land (for airports, parks, and institutions) in the interstices between cities for their common use. When such lands are included, the developed metropolitan area averages 14.84 acres per 100 persons. Therefore, the entire metropolitan area -- "the complex of central city, satellite communities, and the fringe land in between" -- should be the basic planning unit. "Only from consideration of this total urban area can valid conclusions for either the whole or its parts be drawn."

Clawson, Marion. Land for Americans: Trends, Prospects, and Problems (based on the Resources for the Future study Land for the Future by Marion Clawson, R. Burnell Held and Charles L. Studdard, Johns Hopkins Press, 1960. 570pp.). Chicago: Rand McNally & Company, 1963. 141pp. Maps. Sketches. Tables. Graphs. Charts.

An abridged version of the larger work, the book omits the details and documentation of the parent volume but presents its major facts and conclusions and an analysis of their importance for policy issues.

Clawson discusses and analyzes land use as it affects American cities, agriculture, forestry and recreation; considers the long-range public interests in the use of the nation's land; and points out where private interests must yield to public welfare.

Some of the study's findings and conclusions:

1. Major progress in communications and transport has shrunk economic distances, expanded the area of economic activities, and greatly increased the intensity of land use.
2. Although the country has ample land resources, its growing population and the wasteful exploitation by private land owners forbid complacency.
3. "Most land in the United States is, and will remain, privately owned." One-third of the land is publicly owned -- mostly by the federal government and partly by the states -- in the form of forests, pastures, watersheds, highways and parks. Some is owned by local governments in the form of streets, public buildings, utilities and parks. In the decades ahead, the publicly owned land will probably increase to provide more highways, parks and watersheds.
4. Private land use can be extensively controlled through the governmental powers of eminent domain, taxation, police, and the public purse. Government funds for various public purposes can be spent "in ways which materially affect land use and landowners."
5. Government action on land-use issues is affected by social attitudes toward land and public political action.
6. The cities occupy about one percent of the country's total land; but it is the most intensively used land, and the most valuable.
7. The more cities grow, the more intensively they use their land. But only about half the urban land is used; the other half is held idle by land speculators waiting for high demand and higher prices.

8. Cities of 25,000 population or less, in which about one-quarter of the urban people live, use half the total urban land.
9. For a given urban population, the land area needed can vary considerably depending on intensity of use. The amount of land needed for future urban use will depend on government urban policy. If central cities and public transport are favored over suburban development and private transport, intensive and economical land use is possible. Conversely, if suburbs and highways are favored, urban land use will expand. Landowners in central cities and those in their peripheries have opposing land-use goals and each will try to affect government urban policy to serve their private interests.
10. "The geographic location of urban land-use areas in the future will look much like the present -- only more so. The present large urban concentrations will increase in size...(and) many smaller cities will extend their urbanized areas greatly.... On the other hand, the parts of the nation now not urbanized will probably experience relatively minor additions to urban area over the next generation."
11. A steadily increasing demand for recreational land use has paralleled the increases in urbanization, population, longevity, real income, car ownership, paid leisure time, transportation facilities, and cuts in travel costs. To meet the nation's needs for recreational land use, a coordinated national outdoor-recreation system is urgently needed to estimate future demand, acquire land, and finance the use of city, county, state and national parks and beaches.
12. Increased farm productivity gave rise to crop and cropland surpluses. But in contrast with its massive farm subsidies for non-production, the federal government responds slowly to urban land-use needs.
13. Future forest-land needs for watersheds, recreation and timber will greatly increase. In view of this "can we allow (private) forest landowners to do as they please with their forest lands?"
14. "For land use policy, as for any other aspect of American government...(the) basic issue is: do we seek a genuine democracy, with all members of the citizenry having an equal chance to affect public opinion? Or are we content to disenfranchise large numbers of people because of color, residence, inadequate education, or for other reasons?"

Ratcliff, Richard U. Urban Land Economics. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1949. 533pp. Graphs. Tables.

A basic statement of urban land economics, dealing with the processes and patterns of urban land utilization, intended to guide businessmen and public policy makers involved in urban land use.

Urban land use, states Ratcliff, is determined by the market process. "The use that is made by each parcel is the result of economic competition among alternate uses. Thus the processes of city growth are economic processes and the pattern of land use is the product of the urban land market."

The book considers market demand, market supply, and market interaction in that order. Its first chapter introduces the work with a discussion of land rights and the dynamics of the private property system. The next group of chapters discusses demand factors in the urban land market and the economic forces underlying urbanism; non-economic, or social, aspects of the demand for land; and the special demands for various types of land, especially those for housing.

Dealing with the supply side of the land market, Ratcliff describes and analyzes the construction industry and the building process, land credit in the operations of the real estate market, the home-mortgage market and the growing influences of federal intervention. The author then analyzes market functions and organization, the housing market, land income and value, and the evolution and pattern of urban land use structure as a product of urban-land market forces and function.

The last three chapters discuss the economic aspects of urban land policy; analyze the housing problem from an economic point of view; and consider the control of instability in the housing market, the reduction of housing costs, and the abatement of antisocial housing conditions.

Chapin, Stuart F. Jr. Urban Land Use Planning. Urbana, Illinois: University of Illinois Press, 1965. 487pp.

Land use planning deals with the location, amount and intensity of land development needed for the various city functions: industry, housing, business, recreation, education and cultural activities.

Intended as a textbook, the work treats the theory and methods of the art and science of land use planning. Of its three parts, the first examines the economic, social and "public interest" determinants of land use and their interrelationship; the second teaches the use of land use planning methods; and the third deals with analysis, location, space needs, and the preparation of the land use plan.

Haar, Charles M. Land Use Planning: A Casebook on the Use, Misuse, and Re-use of Urban Land. Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1959. 790pp. Tables. Charts. Diagrams. Maps.

An interpretive organization of law and planning literature designed to help students, lawyers and planners to cope with American legal and administrative problems of allocating and developing urban land in metropolitan areas. It examines the assumption, doctrines and implications of city planning law and considers the impact of planning on property rights and the land market and the lawyer's role in real estate transactions.

In an introductory "historical excursion," Haar cites early homesteading laws and explains "The Impact of the Frontier in Land Use." He traces the evolution of planning law showing how judges have reconciled discordant law uses, deals with "Government as Land Owner and Redistributor," and discusses the legal tools for perpetuating the town plan.

Haar attempts to clarify the process by which land use decisions are made. He identifies the alternative agencies for settling disputes, and draws the differences between land and other resources. He suggests how legal institutions and property owners can be moulded into a more rational and effective organization in the use of land resources.

Blumenfeld, Hans. "Are Land Use Patterns Predictable?" Journal of the American Institute of Planners, Vol. XXV, No. 2, May 1959. pp. 61-66. (Also in The Modern Metropolis: Its Origins, Growth, Characteristics, and Planning. Selected Essays by Hans Blumenfeld. The M.I.T. Press, 1967).

Blumenfeld reviews some studies that have identified key variables which affect urban growth patterns. The observations, he concludes, reveal strong regularities in metropolitan land use patterns and indicate the possibility that the latter may be predictable. He urges further checks of the findings in the hope that new research may lead to development of useful land-use models. But he cautions that "...models can only supplement not supplant, the careful evaluation of the impact of the changing needs and intentions of all people and agencies in the community upon the evolving land use patterns" because "...any theory can be valid only within the limits of a given social-economic structure and may change in scale or direction with future change of this structure."



Haar, Charles M. Land Planning Law in a Free Society. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1951. 213pp. Illustrated.

A thorough study of the British Town and Country Planning Act of 1947 and of British thought, practice and experience under its radical revision of public and private housing responsibilities. Haar sketches the history of British housing and housing laws, and compares British with American legal concepts on land use, property, and public versus private interests and rights.

The author guides the American reader through the statute and its complex superstructure of regulations, directions and orders; introduces the Act's planning standards and concepts; analyzes the administrative problems and machinery devised for planning; and relates the Act to the general policy of the Labor Government.

Among the author's "tentative conclusions":

1. "The assumption by the English Government of control over land use and misuse is a major institutional change bound to affect numerous social and economic aims and policies."
2. Unlike past housing and planning legislation, the Act is no mere stopgap measure. "It aims at nothing less than providing a suitable framework for human life.... No one today...may build without conforming to (a master) plan and obtaining the consent of the planning authorities."
3. "Any public planning is inevitably an invasion of private rights to some extent. If a better physical environment is desired, the means thereto must also be accepted."

Rannels, John. The Core of the City: A Pilot Study of Changing Land Uses in Central Business Districts. New York: Columbia University Press, 1956. 237pp.

To the general question "where do things belong in the city?", Rannels contributes a theory to explain the relation of land-based activities to structures and a graphic-statistical method for measuring and comparing groups of activities in the central business district. He tests both in an analysis of some of Philadelphia's central activities: their interactions with each other and with their buildings and environment.

Some of Rannel's conclusions:

1. "The value of the city's physical assets is not inherent in the actual structures so much as in the use that is made of them.... Methods for investigating land uses must therefore take into account both physical and social phenomena."

2. "Activities and accommodations mold and shape each other and together make the city."
3. "Activities take the leading role in an interplay with their environment which may either support or constrain activity."
4. "The vital force of the city...tends both to strengthen and to modify existing patterns of activities and in turn to modify their accommodations and those facilities and services whereby the activities are carried on."
5. The customary measurements of "ground coverage" or "floor-area ratio" and land use designations of "commercial," "residential" and "industrial" do not adequately describe urban land utilization. It is better understood when the underlying systems of activities and their effects on land, buildings and services are considered.

In the final chapter, Rannels outlines a program for further studies toward development of a general theory of locational arrangement of urban activities.

Blumenfeld, Hans. "The Conceptual Framework of Land Use." Ekistics, Vol. 14, No. 85, December 1962, pp. 259-263.  
 (Also in The Modern Metropolis: Its Origins, Growth, Characteristics, and Planning. Selected Essays by Hans Blumenfeld. The M.I.T. Press, 1967).

Critically examining the various concepts involved in the term "land use," Blumenfeld finds conventional classifications, especially divisions into "private" and "public" development, theoretically inadequate. Classifications proposed in recent sophisticated studies adopt "major purpose," rather than ownership, as the relevant criterion. Blumenfeld reviews their multidimensional definitions and the findings on which they are based. "It appears," he concludes, "that land uses must be classified according to many different qualitative as well as quantitative aspects." He discusses the methods of assembling, presenting and using such classifications in analysis and planning.

Analysis based on multidimensional land-use classifications revealed highly consistent regularities in the workings of the real estate market in a free-enterprise economy and the possibility to predict future land use patterns. But the real estate market is geared to benefit land owners exclusively. The inherent contradiction between public planning and private ownership of land frustrates the attempts of community planning to maximize the benefits to the community. For example, designation of a piece of land as a shopping center creates a monopoly for the owner of such land, raises its price, and drives potential developers to other, cheaper land. Thus the very act of designation militates against the implementation of the designated land use.

Mitchell, Robert B. and Chester Drapkin. Urban Traffic: A Function of Land Use. New York: Columbia University Press, 1954. 226pp. Charts. Diagrams. Tables.

A technical report of an experimental phase in a larger research into systems and structures of urban traffic. The study explores the relationships between urban traffic movements and the land uses which generate them, and techniques of collecting traffic information. It aims to improve the planners' ability to "predict more accurately the effects of proposed highway and transit projects on the nature and rate of change in land use." Today such planning analysis, the authors say, "relies heavily on the analyst's judgment and his empirical observation, resulting in a wide range of error."

The report's nine chapters treat land use and traffic problems in city planning; the relationships between land uses and traffic; the structure of traffic; spatial and temporal traffic organization; individual movement of persons; systems of movement of goods and materials; the influence of movement on land use patterns; the needs for improved methods of traffic analysis and suggested directions in which methodological development may proceed.

Of the volume's three appendixes, Appendix A describes the methods and procedures the authors used in their field investigation; Appendix B lists items pertinent to the study of urban movement; and Appendix C describes channels of marketing relevant to the study of urban movement.

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Abrams, Charles. Revolution in Land. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1939. 320pp.

Discusses the history of land use in the United States and the problems in land ownership and use that handicapped the New Deal Administration. Pleads for reforms in land use and control.

Alonso, William. Location and Land Use: Toward a General Theory of Land Rent. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1964. 204pp. Diagrams. Bibliographical footnotes. (Publication of the Joint Center for Urban Studies of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and Harvard University).

Applying the rent theory for agriculture, develops a general theory of land values and uses in cities and regions that arrives at different conclusions from those commonly accepted in land economics.

Beuscher, J. H. Land Use Controls: Cases and Materials. Madison, Wisconsin: The College Printing and Typing Co., 1964.

A law textbook. Compiles the legal devices developed in the United States for influencing the ways in which land is used.

Brown, Robert Kevin. Real Estate Economics: An Introduction to Urban Land Use. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1965. 388pp.

A textbook in real estate economics treating the main aspects of real estate and urban land use within the existing framework of market, legal, and economic forces, and taking a broad and interdisciplinary behavioral approach to the use of land and physical resources.

Furroughs, Roy J. "Should Urban Land be Publicly Owned?" Zoning Digest, Vol. XVIII, No. 8, September 1966, pp. 249-261.

Reviews American and European land tenure and use practices and proposed reforms.

Clawson, Marion. Man and Land in the United States. Lincoln, Nebraska: University of Nebraska Press, 1964. 178pp. Maps. Diagrams. Sketches.

A non-technical historical account of land use in the United States from colonial times to the present: government problems in land settlement, ownership, and control; transfer of public land to private ownership; changes in ideas on land ownership and use; comparison with evolution of land tenure in Latin America; future land-use prospects.

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. The Federal Lands Since 1956: Recent Trends in Use and Management. Baltimore, Maryland: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1967. 113pp. Charts. Tables.

An updating of the above cited work. Clawson reviews developments in federal land policy during 1957-1967 and sees neither radical change nor new directions in federal land management.

Clawson, Marion, R. Burnell Held, and Charles H. Stoddard. Land for the Future. Baltimore, Maryland: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1960. 570pp. Maps. Plans. Tables. Graphs. Charts. (Published for Resources for the Future, Inc.).

Examines existing conflicts in land demand, assesses the areas where change in land use and policy is most necessary, and suggests ways to minimize competing land needs and demands. Studies of six major categories of land use -- urban, recreational, agricultural, forest, grazing, and miscellaneous.

Keeble, Lewis. Principles and Practice of Town and Country Planning. London: The Estate Gazette, Ltd., 1952. 594pp. Maps. Charts. Plans. Tables. Sketches. Bibliography.

A British textbook on city planning. Contains a thorough outline of British principles and standards for land use.

Renne, Roland R. Land Economics: Principles, Problems, and Policies in Utilizing Land Resources. New York: Harper & Bros., 1947. 736pp. Tables. Charts. Maps. Photos.

A textbook in land economics. Discusses the field of land economics, principles of land utilization, major land uses, land use problems and policies, and planning and control of land use.

Whyte, William H. The Last Landscape. Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Company. 376pp. Diagrams. Maps. Bibliography.

Criticizes current land planning and use and discusses available means for saving and reclaiming open space in metropolitan areas.

Wingo, Lowdon, Jr. Transportation and Urban Land. Washington, D.C.:  
Resources for the Future, 1961. 132pp. Graphs.

Demonstrates an approach for analyzing and projecting urban  
land arrangement, with emphasis on residential land use --  
the largest use of urban land.

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